

The Schmooze **Stories with a Yiddish Twist**

A YIDDISH GUIDE TO JOAN HAMBURG **“NEW YORK RADIO’S FIRST LADY”**

The Yiddish word for “radio” is “radyo.”
“First Lady” is written, “ershter dame.”

by
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Syosset, New York

The New York Post reported that Joan Hamburg “is getting the last laugh after she was unceremoniously dumped by WOR radio last year. Hamburg, 79, was canned after 35 years right before she was due to go on air.” The program director had told her, “Leave now. You can’t go on the air.” (article by Cindy Adams)

Shown below is a Yiddish Guide to Joan Hamburg.

“Geboyren” (born)

Joan Hamburg was born on Aug. 12, 1935 in Far Rockaway, New York.
She attended Barnard College.

“khasene gehat” (married)

Hamburg is married to “advocat” (lawyer), Morton Hamburg.

“kinder” (children)

Hamburg has 2 children, John and Elizabeth. Her “tochter” (daughter) contributed to the show and sometimes appeared as a fill-in host. Her “zun” (son), John, is a screenwriter. He did “Meet the Parents,” “Meet the Fochers,” and “Along Came Polly.”

“byuro” (office)

“eliminirn” means “to eliminate”

Hamburg said, “In my office just before airtime, I noticed the human resources person you see before ‘OMG,’ somebody is getting fired.”

“The program director wants to see you.”

Holding a large “konvert” (envelope), I’m told only: “They’re changing programming. Your position’s being eliminated.”

She added, “If they want new merchandise...it’s their candy store.”

“zhurnal” (magazine)

Now, the veteran broadcaster is being named as one of industry bible Radio Ink Magazine’s most influential women in radio in 2015.

FAVORITE

Hamburg frequently broadcast from her favorite places instead of a studio: Sardi’s, the Hamptons, Canyon Ranch, and The Villages (Florida).

FYI: In 1989, Zagat New York City Restaurant Survey, wrote the following about Sardi’s, 235 W. 44th Street: “If you could eat the caricatures” on the wall, food ratings might improve dramatically at this faded Theater District landmark, apart from a glimpse of an occasional celebrity, comments are savage: “gone way downhill,” “a once upon a time,” “truly inedible”; tourist trap,” a “myth,” why, oh why?

“gel” (yellow)

“di velt” (the world)

Carol Channing once called Joan Hamburg, “The Yellow Pages of the World.” She was voted “New Yorker of the Year” by the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce.

“halibt” (beloved)

When Hamburg was fired, there was no time for farewells to her beloved audience (“oylem”), or sponsors, no time for tributes from her many loyal guests whom she had interviewed over the years, no time to even clean out her desk (“shraybtish”). Within hours she had been removed from the WOR website (“vebzaytl”).

“mekhaber” (author)

Ms. Hamburg is the author of two books: “Our Little Black Book of Shopping Secrets” and the “New York on \$45.00 a Day” series.

“muter” (mother)

Hamburg was voted National Mother of the Year.

“kale” (bride); “kales” (brides)

Joan Hamburg broadcasted her show live from Bridal Reflections on Fifth Avenue. Among the participants was Anthony Micari, owner of Bridal Reflections, designer, Jim Hjelm, celebrity wedding planner, Marcy Blum, famed cake designer, Sylvia Weinstock, among others. Guests were treated to an informal fashion (“mode”) show of some of Bridal Reflections most beautiful (“sheyn”) couture gowns.

“sod” (secret)

“kleyd” (gown)

Mr. NYC (7/15/2007) wrote, “Like Mr. NYC, Joan’s show has information on theater, restaurants, shopping, news, and lots of other cool stuff that makes NYC great. Each week her daughter, Liz, did a segment called ‘New York Uncovered’ that reveals the city’s secret treasures.

“heym” (home)

“zetsn zikh” (to sit down)

“mitn kop arop” (upside down)

The New York Post reported (8/18/2011) that Joan Hamburg ignored advice (“eytse”), bought a house in Sagaponack, Long Island, and got to work. It was spacious and gracious, and was called an “upside-down” house because the living room, and kitchen were on the second floor, while the main floor had a tank room for the oil burner, a studio and a foyer. “It was a shambles,” says Hamburg. When she called her husband, who was out of town, and said: “Sit down, because I’m buying you a house.” His reply: “No, no, no!”

Note: They paid \$435,000. And Sagaponack is now one of New York’s most desirable spot, an area where the average home price exceeds \$3.3 million, according to Willow.com.

Source: Article by Micki Siegel, Aug. 18, 2011

“lend” (hip)

“kni” (knee):

”khirurg” (surgeon)

Dr. Thomas Sculco performed hip and knee replacement on Ms. Hamburg in 2007.

“talant” (talent)

“Adding Joan to our roster of talent is a no brainer. New York expects to hear big personalities on 77 WABC and they don’t get much bigger (“greser”) than Joan Hamburg.”

Source: Craig Schwalb, Program Director at 77 WABC

“kompliment” (compliment)

“mitog” (dinner)

“On Thursday night, we went to Joan Hamburg’s for dinner. Earlier that evening, we had attended a taping of Joan’s annual program from the Blue Parrot--a disorganized dump of a bar and Tex-Mex joint disorganized dumps being refreshingly rare in the Hamptons. It was a small guest list for dinner, by my request...Joan outdid herself. She made her duly famous chicken pot pie...And she made pudding-y cornbread and baked ham. She had fresh peach cobbler with vanilla ice cream for dessert. It was all so delicious (“batamt”), I had seconds of everything. I confess: I willingly overate when Joan, reminding me of my mother, urged me to eat even more at the same time she complimented me on my weight loss/or told me to lose weight, (take your pick)...I left the Hamburg’s woozy with food.”

Quote by Arthur Schwartz, www.TheFoodMaven.com

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“gelekhter” (laughter)

“I have never heard an audience laugh like this. People were screaming with laughter...and I’m not just saying some people in the audience. I’m saying the audience [was] just screaming with laughter...the person next to you is sort of hitting you on the arm, he’s laughing so loud.”

Joan Hamburg, review of “Old Jews Telling Jokes”

Comment: Why not. The logo is a monstrous pastrami sandwich with a gherkin perched on top of it.